



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

November 20, 2015

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D. C. 20500

Through: Regional Administrator Tony Robinson
FEMA Region 6
Denton, Texas 76209

RE: Request for Presidential Disaster Declaration – Major Disaster

Dear President Obama:

Under the provisions of Title I and Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5123, 5170-5189g and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36 (Major Disaster), I request that you declare a major disaster for the state of Texas as a result of the severe weather and flooding event that began on October 22, 2015, and continues to devastate communities across the state.

In response to the situation, I have taken the appropriate action under state law by directing the execution of the state's emergency plan and by declaring a state of disaster on November 20, 2015. The current declaration includes 15 counties statewide:

I am requesting that you declare the following counties as a disaster for individual assistance based on joint federal/state assessments: Bastrop, Brazoria, Caldwell, Comal, Galveston, Guadalupe, Hardin, Harris, Hays, Hidalgo, Liberty, Navarro, Travis, Willacy and Wilson Counties.

Due to the rain pattern affecting the state over several weeks and the subsequent flooding, local jurisdictions have been unable to completely assess damages for public assistance (PA) during the 30-day window. The state continues to conduct and schedule PA joint damage assessments. If it is determined, through the assessments, that the state will meet or exceed our federal threshold of \$35.4 million, I may request a PA major disaster declaration.

Governor's Declaration – October Severe Weather

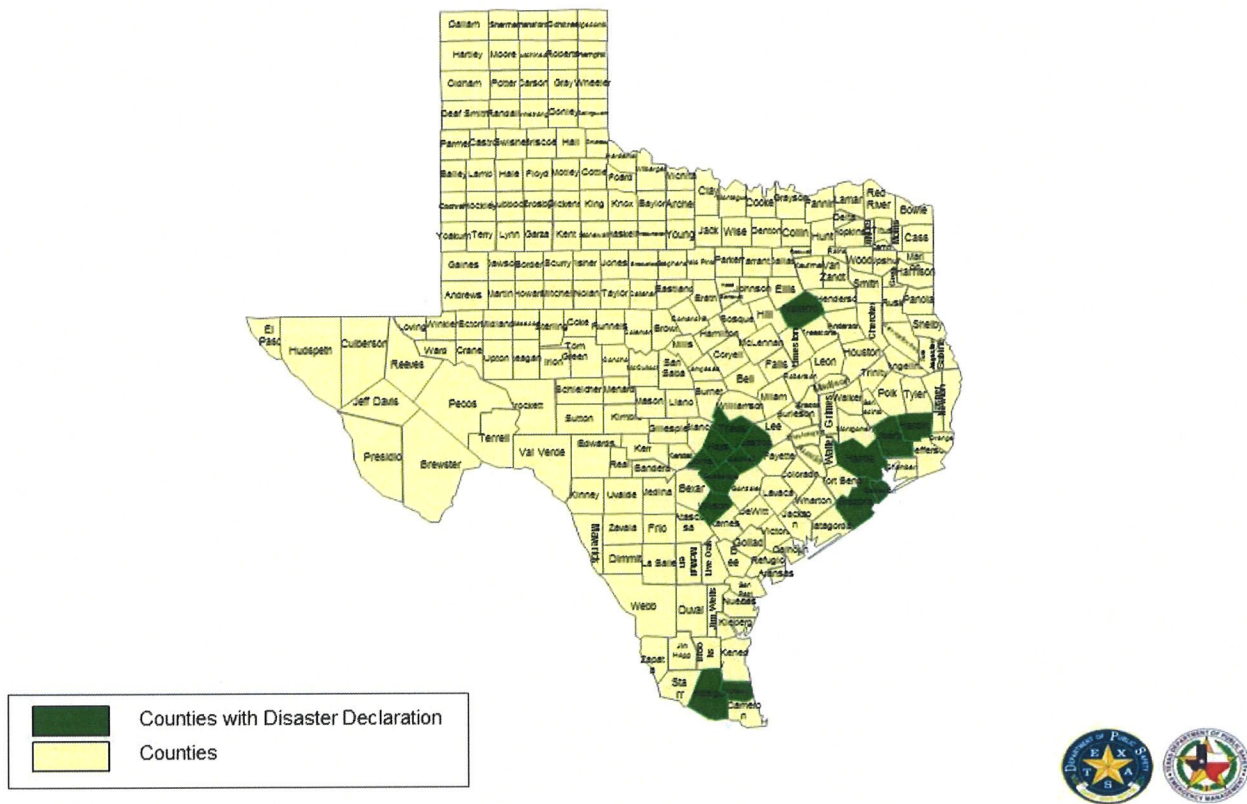


Figure 1. Counties on the Governor's Disaster Declaration

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

The state of Texas has experienced severe and persistent weather receiving significant rainfall beginning on October 22, 2015. Moisture from the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean steadily increased over Texas on Thursday, October 22, 2015, with a series of upper-level disturbances associated with an upper-level low-pressure system, along with the remnants of Hurricane Patricia, which produced numerous rounds of thunderstorms. Texas bore the brunt of the major flooding as moisture from Patricia arrived. This general shift in the weather pattern which favored high levels of tropical moisture was perhaps the first imprint of El Niño. The flood danger continued to shift eastward across the Deep South with severe weather, including flash flooding and tornados, occurring on Thursday, October 29–Saturday, October 31, 2015.

Flood elevations across the state continue to rise, and despite surcharge releases, bracing and other mitigation efforts, water is expected to flood, affect downstream conditions and cause cascading damages to homes and infrastructure. Over 756,000 people live in flood hazard areas

across 43 counties intersecting with potentially flooded rivers. Over 300,000 housing units are located within the Special Flood Hazard Area, which covers over 8,700 square miles. Many of the counties affected by this disaster were already affected by the May severe weather (DR-4223-TX), and this disaster will significantly hinder recovery.

On October 22, 2015, a plume of tropical moisture enhanced by the remnants of Hurricane Patricia through the mid-levels of the atmosphere combined with a weak upper-level disturbance created several days of intense rainfall over Deep South Texas (Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy counties). Numerous daily rainfall records were set across Deep South Texas.

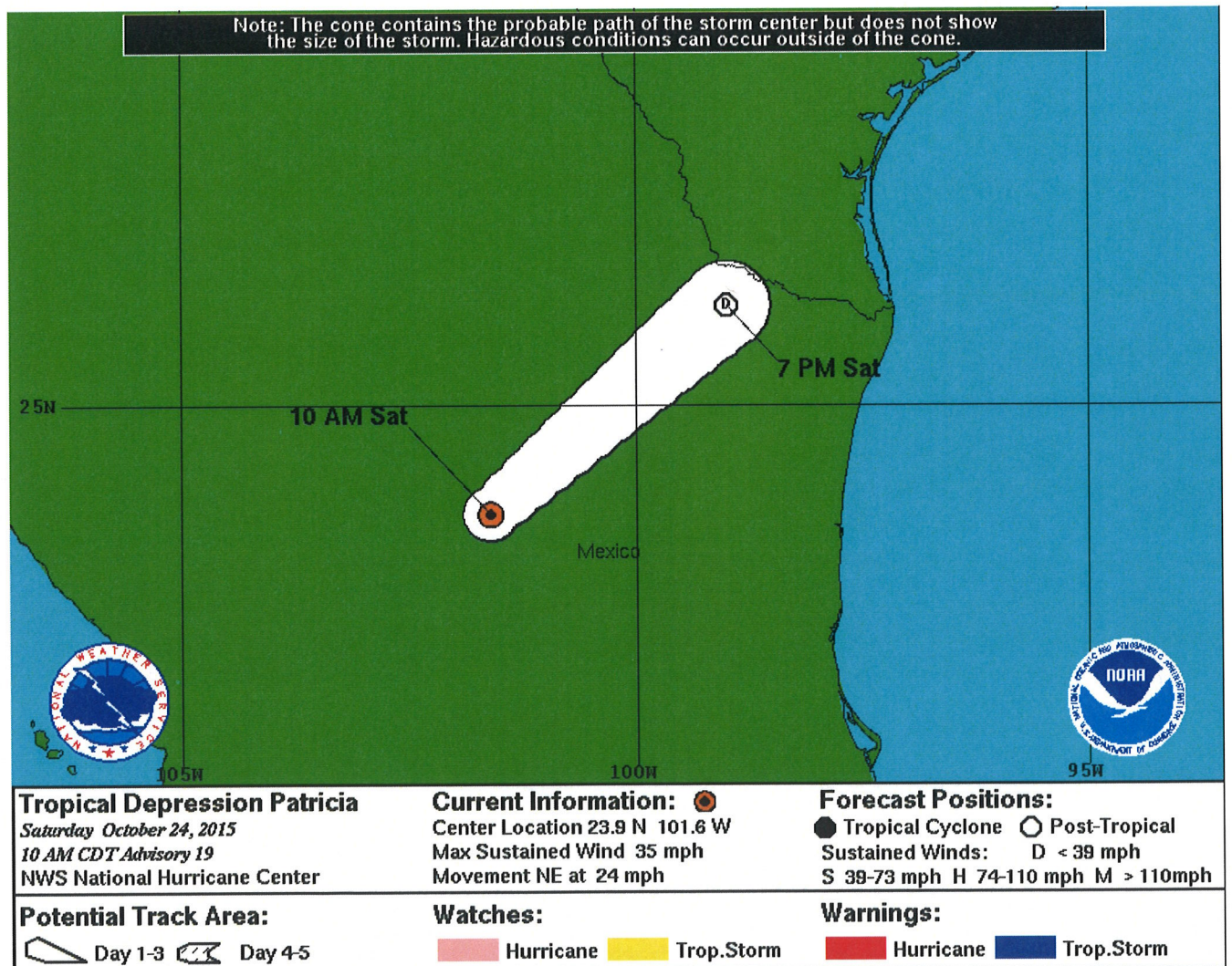


Figure 2: NOAA Tropical Depression Patricia storm path

On October 23, 2015, Texas Disaster District 21 increased its level of readiness to Level III (Increased Readiness) in order to respond as needed to the heavy rain and potential for flooding forecast to affect Disaster District 21 counties (Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy). Governor Greg

Abbott announced the elevated activation of the Texas State Operations Center (SOC) on October 24, 2015, as severe storms were expected to impact parts of Texas over the weekend. Governor Abbott also approved the use of state resources and they were staged for rapid deployment as needed to assist local officials during the significant weather event.

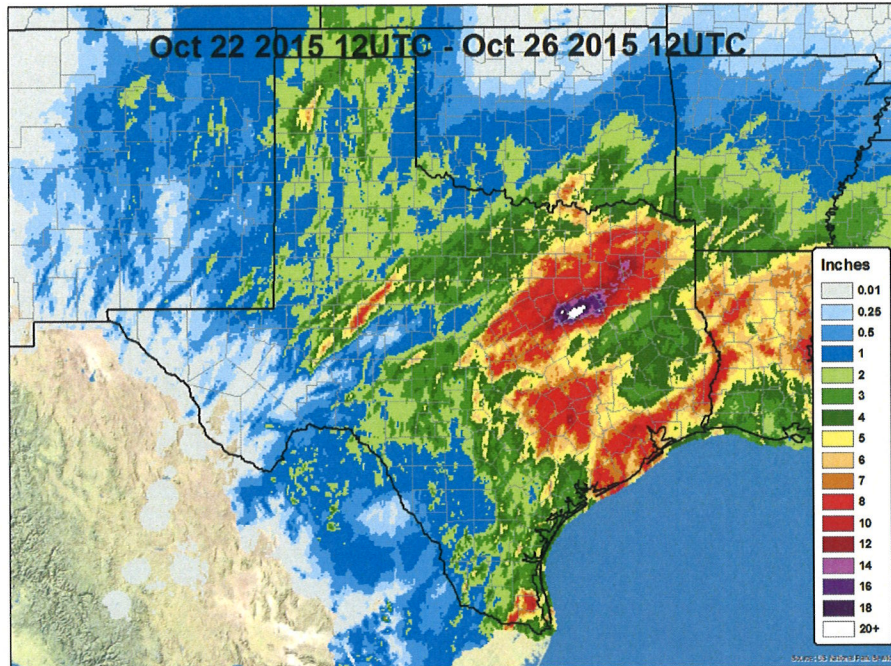


Figure 3: NOAA Rainfall map, October 22 – 26, 2015

As the Upper Valley/Ranchlands band moved east, it combined with the bulk of the remaining moisture from Patricia and a second, even more intense band began dumping buckets of rain in southeastern Hidalgo County, resulting in numerous water rescues from flooded neighborhoods beginning shortly thereafter and continuing throughout the day. The estimated and

measured 10 to 12 inches of rain in Hidalgo County was far too much for drainage systems to handle; flooding worsened in some areas even well after the rain ended and continued, affecting dozens of homes and businesses.

In Brownsville, hundreds of vehicles were flooded and dozens of homes and trailers had water in them. A rainfall total of 6.55" in Brownsville on October 30 was the highest non-tropical one-day rainfall total in October on record.

Authorities in Willacy County, where much of the area remained under water when the next weekend's rain hit, said this flooding was worse than Hurricane Dolly. In Willacy County, one water rescue was performed and one flooded home rescue was performed. Representatives from the International Boundary and Water Commission were called in to Willacy County to assess the



Figure 4: Flooding in Weslaco on October 24, 2015

situation and help authorities find a way to move significant amounts of the water into the floodways and levees. Six roads in the county were closed for more than five days including 2209 Rd, 1762 Rd, FM 1420, FM 1018, FM 498 and Business 77. Several sandbag distribution points were established to aid in response and mitigating efforts.



Figure 5: Willacy County on October 27, 2015

On Friday, October 23, 2015, flooding and flash flooding occurred in North Central Texas as well. Both northbound and southbound lanes of Interstate 45 in Corsicana, Navarro County, closed on Friday afternoon due to water on the roadway, resulting in lengthy backups reported to stretch 12 miles. Interstate 45 opened back up at 0700 on Saturday, October 24. The Texas Highway Patrol and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) worked to clear Interstate 45 of stranded drivers. Interstate 45 closed again mid-morning on Saturday, October 24, due to water over the highway at Richland Creek and opened at 0700 hours on Sunday, October 25.



Figure 6: Union Pacific freight train derailment in

Water over roadways and stalled vehicles affected Interstate 35 both northbound and southbound through Bell and McLennan Counties. TxDOT used high-profile vehicles to evacuate 50 residential homes south of the Magnolia Lake Dam. Numerous swift-water rescues were conducted, including six children and one adult from a home in Corsicana. The American Red Cross set up two shelters for evacuees. One Union Pacific freight train with 64 cars and two locomotive engines derailed in Corsicana due to heavy rain. Swift-water rescue teams were dispatched to save two Union Pacific workers from the partially submerged train. Corsicana received 16.35 inches of rain on October 23 and 4.08 inches of rain on October 24.

The Trinity River at Oakwood rose into moderate flood status of 40 feet on October 25 and rose into major flood status of 45 feet on October 26 and remains in moderate flood stage as of November 9, 2015, due to additional rainfall on October 30.

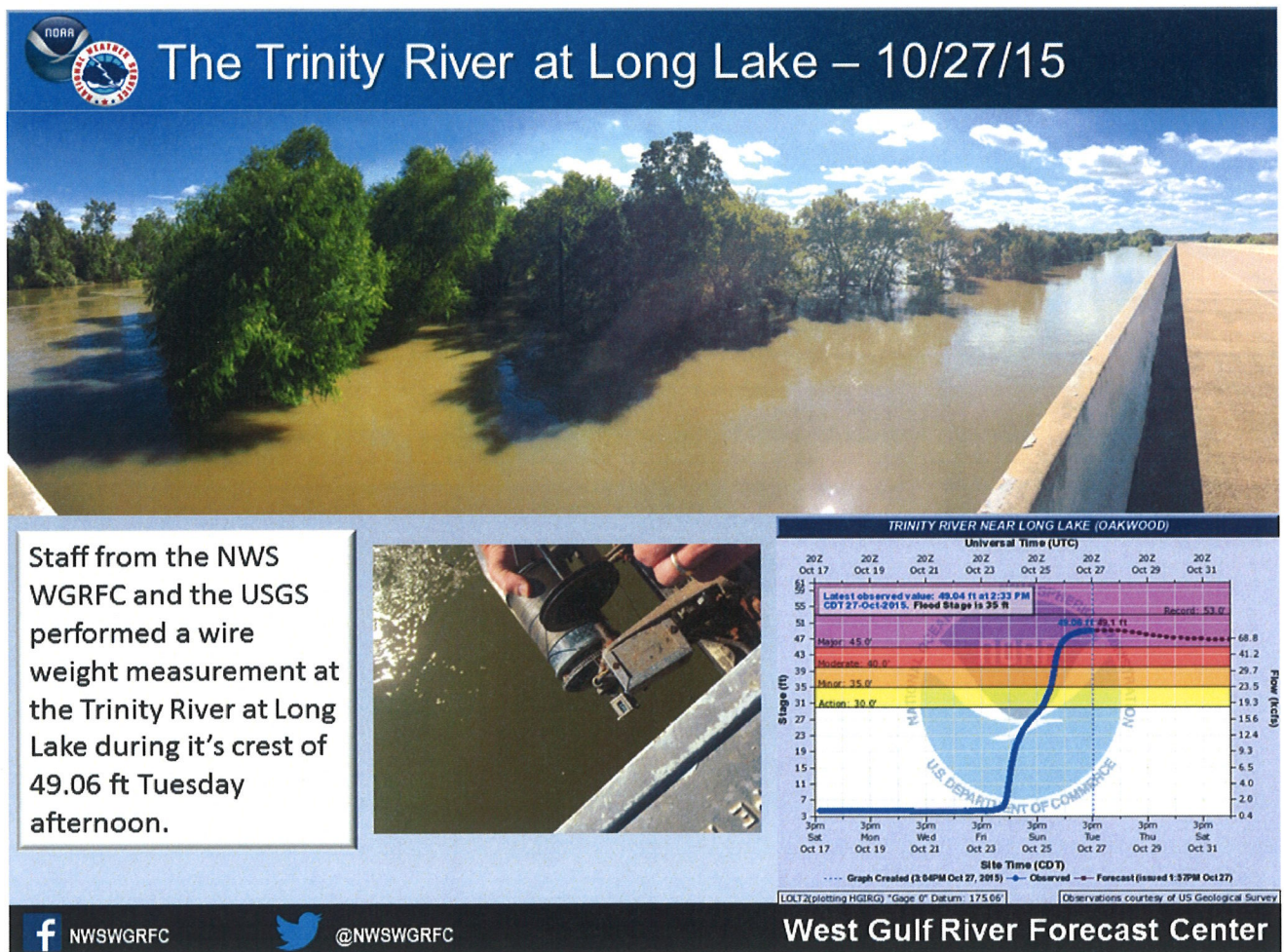


Figure 7: NOAA Trinity River at Long Lake on October 27, 2015

Voluntary evacuations for Bolivar Peninsula in Galveston County occurred due to flooding of Highway 87 due to higher than normal tides. Thirty swift water rescues were reported across Ector County. Four swift water rescues were reported across Midland County, and crews responded to a recreational vehicle park in West Midland for a report of rising water in a trailer park.

Storms again thundered through parts of Texas beginning on Thursday, October 29, 2015, dumping more than a foot of rain on some areas and causing historic flooding that trapped school buses and other vehicles. Hidalgo, Cameron and Willacy counties in Deep South Texas were once again impacted by this event. When combined with the first event, some areas in Willacy County have estimated to have received 14 to 20 inches total. The additional rains in Willacy County re-flooded the town of San Perlita with more than three feet of water in fields and streets and one to two feet of water surrounding or entering homes. Some evacuations were required in Willacy County.

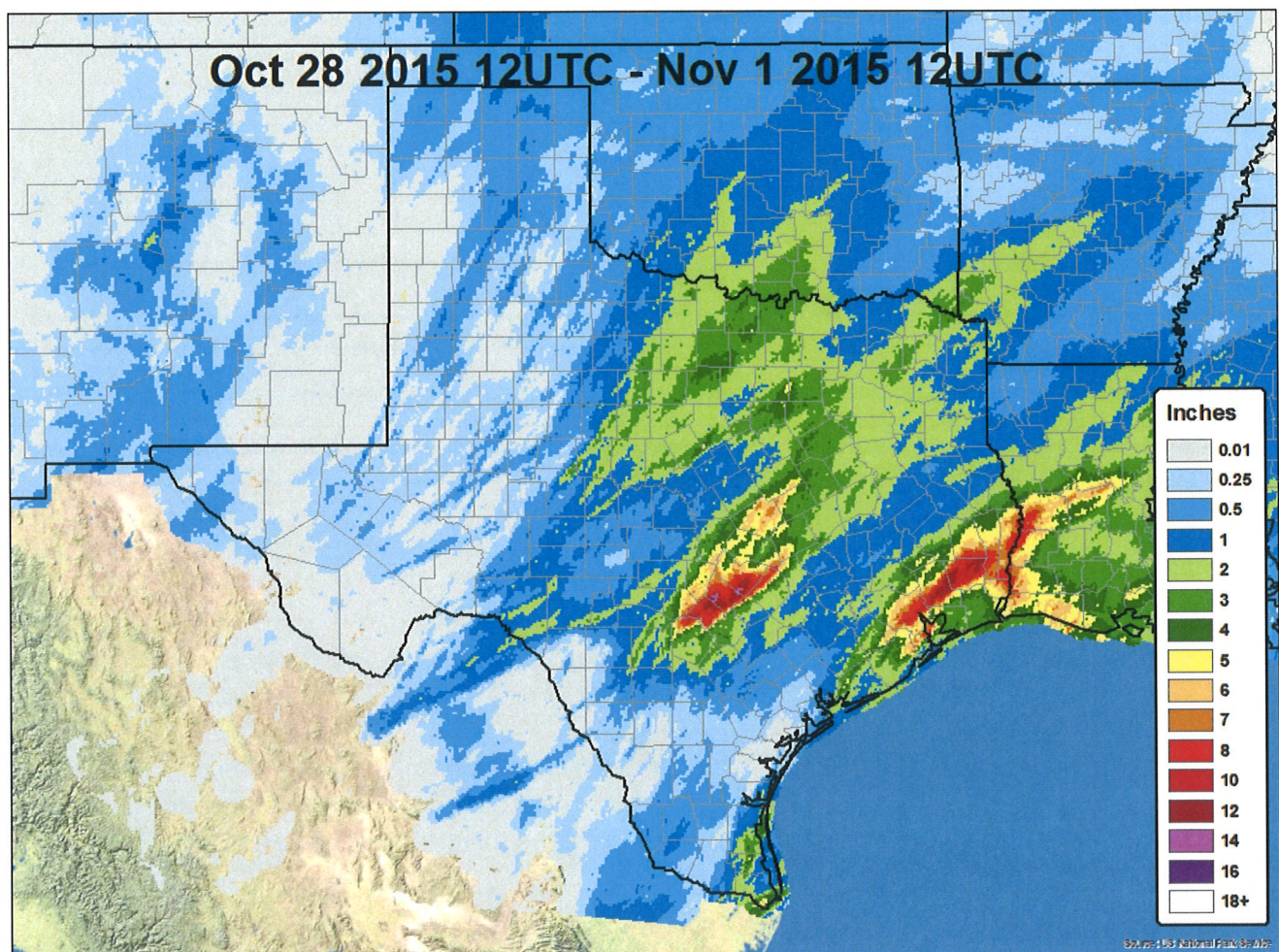


Figure 8: NOAA rainfall map, October 28–November 1, 2015

Evacuations were ordered for homes along the San Marcos and Blanco rivers. The Blanco River, where a house with nine people inside was swept away in May, surged to more than 26 feet, or 13 feet above flood stage, on Friday. Initial reports were that the storms caused more than 650 homes to sustain significant structural damage and destroyed approximately 50 homes in Hays County. Two structures collapsed, and Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) transmission lines sustained damage from tornadic activity. The San Marcos Police Department sustained some lightning damage to storm sirens and generator. The emergency police radio system at the tower site sustained damage as well.



Figure 9: Flooded vehicles, Friday, Oct. 30, 2015, in San Marcos

In Travis County, the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) had the highest daily rainfall total ever at 14.99 inches on October 30, and the highest monthly rainfall total of 21.83 inches. The ground floor of the Austin Air Traffic Control Tower and Terminal Radar Approach Control facility was flooded by approximately six inches of water, causing extensive damage, during Friday's heavy storm. This incident resulted in flight cancellations and interruption in travel. The Houston Air Route Traffic Control Center assumed responsibility for the

airspace. The Federal Aviation Administration successfully transferred responsibility for low-altitude airspace to the San Antonio radar approach control. The agency reopened the Austin air traffic control tower, enabling the airport to operate on both runways on Tuesday, November 3, 2015. A watercraft ban was issued on Onion Creek and Barton Creek in Travis County. Residents of Onion Creek, previously flooded two years ago during the 2013 Halloween flooding event, were evacuated during this storm system on October 30 and were allowed to return on October 31. A volunteer reception center was set up in Austin on November 8, 2015, and in seven days, there were 724 homeowner intakes with over 1695 volunteer hours.



Figure 10: Travis County destroyed homes and vehicle after the flooding on October 30, 2015

The Colorado River reached flood stage at the City of Smithville on October 31, 2015. Water flooded the Colorado River RV Park at FM 969 and homes between Bastrop and Smithville in the Doty River, Hidden Valley and Pecan Shores subdivisions. 180 students spent the night at school in Bastrop County on October 30 due to flooded roads preventing ingress or egress of buses and personal vehicles intended to deliver children home and parents from picking up their children. Heavy rains that moved through the region caused flooding in Bastrop, Brazoria, Caldwell, Comal, Galveston, Guadalupe, Hardin, Harris, Hays, Hidalgo, Liberty, Navarro, Travis, Willacy and Wilson Counties. Additional flooding was experienced in Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy counties, necessitating the need to open emergency shelters.



Figure 11: The Colorado River rises over FM2571 in Smithville on Saturday, October 31

On October 30 and 31, 2015, the intense rainfall was coupled with tornadic activity. An EF-2 tornado touched down in Floresville, leaving significant damage in its wake. The tornado tossed a semi-trailer truck onto the roof of a hotel in Floresville and damaged the high school, cars and homes. There were downed power lines and trees throughout the area. Two tornados touched down in Guadalupe County, an EF-2 tornado near Geronimo resulting in numerous road closures and evacuations and an EF-1 tornado near the City of Zorn that continued into Hays County. An EF-0 tornado touched down in D'Hanis, 50 miles west of San Antonio, where most of the damage was centralized in the Main Street area. The strong winds uprooted trees and bent metal siding from buildings like paper. But most notably, the storm destroyed several historic buildings which were operated by Vantage Bank in the tiny town of about 550 residents.



Figure 12: Floresville High School tornado damage from October 30, 2015



Figure 13: D'Hanis, Texas Main Street after tornado touched down on October 30, 2015

The National Weather Service also confirmed that 11 tornadoes touched down on October 31, 2015, in Chambers, Harris, Galveston and Brazoria Counties. In a subdivision in eastern Harris County, approximately 30 homes were reported damaged. In the Houston suburb of Friendswood, one home had a collapsed roof, and 30 homes had major damages. In the City of Alvin, approximately 25 mobile homes were damaged and two people were injured. There were also two short-track tornados in Willacy County.

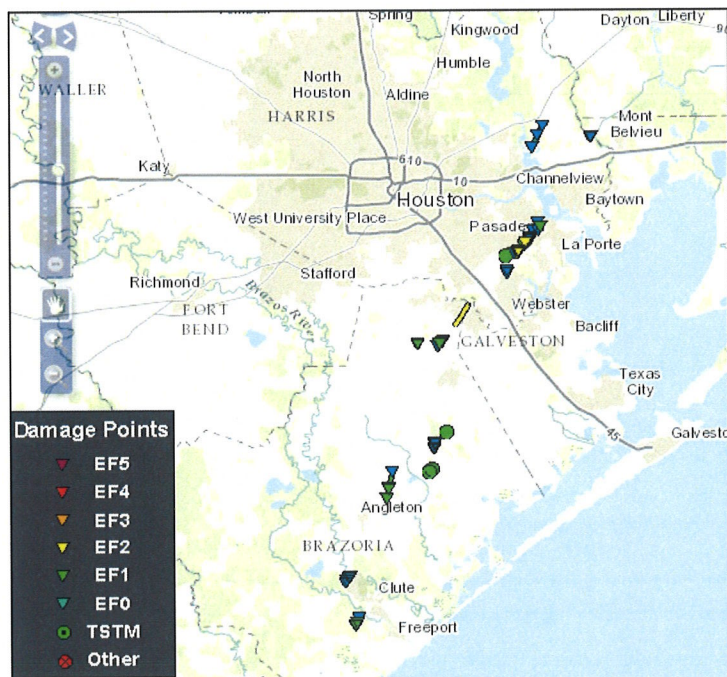


Figure 14: NOAA Graphic of Tornado Activity on October 31, 2015

The total population in the counties on the Governor's Disaster Declaration is 7,150,677.

RESPONSE OVERVIEW

The following information details state and local government resources used to alleviate conditions of this disaster:

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)

The Texas Highway Patrol, Aircraft Operations Division, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and DPS Communications were active statewide with personnel and equipment.

Texas Task Force 1 (TX-TF1)

TX-TF1 has been engaged in search and rescue operations since October 23, providing over 106 personnel from eight participating agencies. Fourteen water rescue squads, five water rescue managers, three agency liaison officers and 17 helicopter search and rescue teams (HSARTs) were activated. TX-TF-1 made 51 rescues, 39 evacuations and 4 assists in multiple counties statewide. The majority of task force members are provided from local fire departments, EMS agencies and other local first responder organizations which then must backfill positions to compensate for those providing search and rescue efforts across Texas.

Texas Military Forces (TXMF)

During the response from October 22 to 26, TXMF activated a total of 128 personnel, 4 UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, two UH-72 Lakota helicopters, 12 high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs), two High Profile Vehicles (HPVs), seven dump trucks and one recovery wrecker. TXMF completed 10 missions resulting in the rescue or evacuation of 10 people.

During the response from October 29 to 31, TXMF activated 70 personnel, two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, two UH-72 Lakota helicopters, four HMMWVs, 20 HPVs and two recovery wreckers. TXMF completed three missions resulting in the rescue or evacuation of 35 people.



Figure 15: A helicopter rescues several residents of the Onion Creek neighborhood of Austin on October 30

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

During the response, TxDOT deployed over 1000 personnel for weather operations, using 888 pieces of equipment. TxDOT worked in 12-hour shifts to clear roadways and used high-profile vehicles to evacuate residents south of Magnolia Dam near Corsicana. Debris removal crews are present in various counties and the state. TxDOT estimates over \$1.8 million in damages.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

TPWD assigned more than 140 game wardens to provide assistance since October 23 across the state. Game wardens continue to provide assistance with rescues, law enforcements, traffic control, welfare checks and security. TPWD provided resources including airboats, shallow draft boats, river boat teams, and a helicopter to assist with these duties. Game wardens coordinated over 200 missions, rescued 58 people, evacuated 168, assisted 14 vehicles, provided 2 medical assists, and conducted 42 welfare checks. Operations are still ongoing while game wardens continue to be responsible for their day-to-day responsibilities and support with border operations in addition to disaster operations.

Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS)

Personnel at the State Operations Center are providing support for the Emergency Services Branch, Geographic Information Systems, and aviation search and rescue. A type III Incident Management Team activated in San Marcos, Hays County.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

TCEQ has engaged over 25 staff around the state since October 23 to provide technical guidance to local governments with debris issues and ensure the proper authorizations are received. Staff has also coordinated with water and wastewater utilities to ensure systems are operational, boil water notices are issued as needed, and public notifications are submitted for significant waste water overflows. Staff is available to support hazardous materials statewide. They have worked with local authorities on several dam issues, including Navarro and Hays Counties. Six counties (Navarro, Hays, Bastrop, Lampasas, Galveston and Harris) issued boil water notices mostly due to broken water lines and leaks. All boil water notices have since been lifted. TCEQ continue to monitor any wastewater overflows from the numerous treatment facilities and their collection systems that were impacted by the flooding and coordinate with the facilities to address any issues. The North Texas Municipal Water District experienced an unauthorized discharge of domestic wastewater from its South Mesquite Regional Wastewater Treatment facility. The discharge is highly diluted due to excessive rain water and no environmental impacts are anticipated. In the City of Austin, flood waters entered the city's wastewater collection system causing an overflow from a manhole at Roy Guerrero Park. The overflow was contained in the

area and did not reach the Colorado River. Persons using private supply wells within a half mile of the overflow site were advised to use distilled or boiled water.

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

DSHS provided a Multi-Patient Vehicle (AMBUS) and crew from EMTF 7 to evacuate 18 wheelchair bound patients and 4 ambulatory patients from the Providence Memory Center Care Facility in Buda. Four ESF 8 personnel from Health Service Region 8 evaluated medical support and hospital requirements at the Floresville hospital. Personnel assisted with the reestablishment of power to the facility and medical contingency planning. Health Service Region 7 operated a virtual RPHMOC to monitor the situation and answer questions from emergency managers about public health & medical needs. They also coordinated the AMBUS deployment, held a tetanus and flu shot clinic at a resource center in Caldwell County and placed sanitarians on standby to inspect shelters if needed. Two liaison officers were on call personnel to the State Operations Center to coordinate ESF 8 support during the event.

Other Agencies and Organizations

Additional agencies and organizations continue to provide support to victims across the state including the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Public Utility Commission of Texas, Texas Health and Human Services Commission, 2-1-1, Texas Department of Insurance and the Texas Animal Health Commission.

Local Government

Local law enforcement, fire, EMS, public works, public utilities and emergency management staff spent countless hours responding to debris clearing, stranded motorists/travelers and weather-related injuries. Human services operations are ongoing with widespread flooding along the state's major river basins displacing hundreds of families.

Voluntary Agency Assistance

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) have been very active throughout Texas since the May severe weather, continuing to provide many services for recovery efforts as well as response and recovery efforts for the Eagle Pass flooding and Hidden Pines wildfires that occurred prior to these October flooding events. Due to the large number of disaster events throughout Texas this year, many VOAD financial and personnel resources have been depleted, and they are operating with little to no funding. Voluntary organization resources are mostly donor-based and dependent upon the economic climate. This causes concern with the VOAD ability to provide response and recovery resources in future events and be able to sustain assistance throughout this event.

VOADs have provided mass care sheltering; feeding; bulk distribution; reunification; damage assessments; emergency food boxes; Volunteer Reception Center and Family Assistance Center staffing; mud out; packing and salvaging of personal property; debris removal; pressure washing; sanitizing treatments of flooded homes; spiritual and emotional care; shower units; heavy equipment; clothing distribution; flood buckets and clean-up kits; direct financial assistance such as gift cards, food and hotel vouchers; personal care and comfort kits; medical kits; blankets and many more services. These resources, however, are not a long-term recovery solution.

VOADs are having difficulty finding affordable housing for displaced survivors from the floods. One shelter remains open with 55 displaced residents in Travis County. The shelter in Bastrop County closed on November 18, 2015, after finding housing for the remaining 11 residents. The VOADs are reporting similar affordable housing issues in many other areas across Texas.

VOAD statistics through November 15, 2015:

- Many local independent shelters and respite centers were opened throughout the state.
- A total of 1,066 cases have been opened; however, case work is continuing.
- A total number of 1,749 mental health contacts have been made.
- A total number of 3,922 clean up kits have been distributed.
- A total number of 27,953 meals, 2025 drinks and 1300 snacks have been served.

American Red Cross (ARC): ARC is providing sheltering, feeding, damage assessments and case management as requested. American Red Cross operations were at a Level V. During the incident, 26 American Red Cross and partner/non-ARC shelters opened with a total number of shelter overnight stays at 2,377. The sheltering peak population on October 31 in 10 shelters was 343.

The Salvation Army (TSA): TSA has committed \$200,000 to fund response, case management and direct services as a result of the October floods. This is in addition to the \$394,000 previously committed to fund case management and direct services as a result of the spring floods. The response to flooding in the San Marcos and South Austin area includes the New Braunfels Corps providing meals and emotional and spiritual care at local shelters as well as the New Braunfels Canteen continuing to provide service in the San Marcos area supporting both shelter operations and bulk distribution operations at the Kyle Performing Arts Center. The Salvation Army provided over 1,500 clean up kits, 576 cases of bottled water, 1000 pairs of work gloves, 475 loads of laundry and bug spray and fire ant bait for anyone who has been affected by the floods. The Williamson County Canteen continues to provide meals at the Dittmar Recreation Center shelter in South Austin. The San Marcos Service Unit will be participating in the Multi-Agency Resource Center to provide emergency assistance to households throughout Hays County.

In South Texas the McAllen Corps canteen continues to respond in the town of San Perlita in

Willacy County where flood waters affected a number of homes, businesses and commercial buildings.

In Houston the Houston Area Command continues to monitor the flooding there with the Pasadena Corps and canteen providing roaming feeding as needed in the affected areas.

Texas Baptist Men and Southern Baptists of Texas: Both organizations have deployed mud-out recovery units, shower units, chaplain team, incident management team, a command unit and an assessment team with over 40 volunteers in Weslaco, San Marcos and Floresville.

The Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley: The organization distributed bags of food to flood survivors in the Rio Grande Valley.

The Food Bank of San Antonio: The organization distributed food to flood survivors in seven counties across Central Texas.

Mercy Chefs: The organization served hot meals in the Austin area.

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES): RACES volunteers monitored radio traffic on local public service radios and amateur radio repeaters.

Behavioral Health Impacts

These severe weather events (e.g., rain, damaging winds, flooding, tornadoes) bring damage and destruction to many communities across the state including many counties and communities hard-hit by similar events in the recent past. Travis County experienced record flooding during the Halloween Floods of 2013, only to go through the same experience during the 2015 Halloween weekend. Hays County residents are at the beginning of their recovery from the devastating and record breaking floods of Memorial Day weekend 2015, and many must start the process all over again due to flooding that occurred in the same areas. The behavioral health impact is significant particularly for those re-traumatized by these recurring events. With more rain and storms expected in the near future and throughout the winter, the need for behavioral health services will increase along with the needs for other assistance and services. Survivors are tired, angry and defeated. There is anxiety about the weather predictions for the coming months. Individuals and communities are stretched to their limits with ongoing stress teamed with hyper-vigilance, which can delay the emotional recovery process for many survivors. Behavioral health professionals report ongoing emotional and spiritual fatigue across the state.

The most significant damages occurred in Travis and Hays Counties from the severe rain and flooding that occurred October 29 to 31, 2015. In 2013, Travis County was hit by a record-breaking flood that devastated parts of the county including loss of life and property. This scenario was repeated again in 2015 over the anniversary dates for the 2013 floods. There were six fatalities in Central Texas, and extensive damage to property including homes and

businesses. The flooding hit the same neighborhood that was damaged and destroyed in 2013. Austin Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC), the local mental health authorities (LMHA) for Travis County, responded to assist with the behavioral health needs of survivors. The Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT) staff met with flood survivors at the Dittmar Recreation Center which served as a shelter where they completed five crisis screenings and two full crisis assessments over a two-day period (October 30 to 31) and facilitated a children's group at the shelter. On November 1, MCOT staff met with over 30 survivors at the Dove Springs Recreation Center (Flood Assistance Center) and provided information and referrals for counseling. They continue a presence at this location and will continue to do so until all survivor behavioral health needs are met. ATCIC was assisted by social workers from the City of Austin and Travis County and personnel from the Austin Disaster Relief Network (ADRN), who provided psychological first aid. Counselors report real concerns about the re-traumatization of the majority of the families they are seeing as most were impacted by the flood two years ago. This flooding also occurred over the anniversary dates of the 2013 flood, which triggered a lot of memories and fears from the past event. Counselors from ATCIC stated most of the people they talked to were very worried about their children, who are upset and fearful about more rain forecast and just water in general. Many survivors are angry about the buy-out process that has been going on since 2013. Overall, the counselors observed survivors who look haggard, exhausted and depressed.

In Hays County, San Marcos and Wimberley were devastated by flooding for the second time in six months. As the rain came in, at least two nursing homes had to be evacuated and an AMBUS was dispatched to support these evacuations. Residents were returned to the nursing homes and were displaced for less than 24 hours. In San Marcos, elementary school children were trapped at the school for five hours and had to be rescued. This is very traumatic for children and parents. The flooding destroyed and damaged houses and businesses, many of which had been damaged or destroyed in May with their recovery efforts wiped out in a matter of hours. Some businesses have already said they plan to close after this second disaster and not rebuild or reopen. In Wimberley, Cypress Creek flooded its banks and created a river through the center of town. A shelter was opened at the community center. There was localized flooding in San Marcos with evacuations occurring along the various rivers in the county. San Marcos opened two shelters which housed 66 people the night of October 31. Hill Country MHDD Centers, the LMHA for Hays County, provided behavioral health staff to support the shelters and the MARC that opened on November 2. Hays County opened a flood recovery supply site and reported 200 people were provided with clearing supplies, water and other items. The LMHA is developing a strategy to identify the general areas damaged by the flooding and to begin canvassing the areas to provide emotional support, crisis intervention and assess for additional needs. Behavioral health staff from Hill Country MHDD Centers observed a lot of neighbors helping one another and even strangers as the waters subsided. Amid the chaos, parents tried to create some normalcy for their children by allowing them to go out for Halloween. The most common reactions reported were frustration and anger about having to go through this type of situation all over again. It was reported that behavioral health responders showed signs of emotional fatigue themselves and stress management plans were made to keep workers on a 40-hour per week

schedule along with time off to regroup and decompress. Some of the behavioral staff and volunteers were impacted by the floods and/or knew family or friends impacted.

In Caldwell County, flooding on the Blanco and San Marcos Rivers forced mandatory evacuations of 3,500 residents along the waterways on October 30-31, 2015. Seventy-seven people had to be rescued. A shelter was opened in Luling for displaced residents.

There was significant flooding in Willacy and Hidalgo Counties, in south Texas. A service center was set up in San Perlita in Willacy County, where Tropical Texas Behavioral Health, the LMHA, reached out to provide behavioral health services and crisis services as needed. Providers of behavioral health services have a limited number of qualified staff that can invoice for billable hours. When staff is utilized for disaster response and recovery operations, the responding local mental health authority (LMHA) must redirect services, shift or reassign staff workloads to ensure that service delivery is not affected and the center's ability to generate revenue is not jeopardized. Despite the number of potential responders, managed care drives services for mandated mental health priority populations for which centers receive reimbursement. LMHAs and other providers have provided emergency response services with the understanding that lack of human resources and fiscal impact to normal operations will limit their activities. As a result of budget constraints, demands to provide specific services, contract requirements to meet predetermined target numbers of individuals served, and fiscal regulations, discretionary funds are unavailable for other community needs, including disaster response and recovery activities.

Without federal assistance, Texas does not have the ability or resources to meet or absorb the disaster behavioral health-related response and recovery needs and expenses associated with providing crisis counseling services. If these costs are to be absorbed by the local provider, a direct negative impact will be experienced on both service delivery and the state's disaster response plan, because funds designated for services to Texas's priority populations will be redirected to disaster response and recovery operations and not for the fund's intended purpose.

Deaths

Since October 22, 2015, there have been six deaths reported related to multiple weather-related incidents around the state. Some of the incidents that led to the deaths and injuries are described below.



Figure 16: Rescue personnel search for people trapped by a rising Onion Creek on Bluff Springs Road, Friday, Oct. 30, 2015 in Austin

Friday, October 30, 2015: In Travis County, a woman and a man were swept away by flood waters on Friday from their southeast Travis County home. The man was found alive and is being treated at a hospital. Authorities later found the body of the elderly woman who had been swept away from her home in the Austin area. The body of a driver who went missing in the floods was also found in Travis County on Friday.

Another body was found at Joint Base San Antonio Camp Bullis in Bexar County after a driver was swept away in flood waters on Camp Bullis Road at around 6:15 a.m.

Saturday, October 31, 2015: The body of a man who went missing after his vehicle was caught in floodwaters in Travis County was recovered.

Two people were also recovered in Harris County, City of Houston, on Saturday. One body was in a rain-swollen ditch, while the other was in a flooded wooded area.

Business Impacts

Over 150 businesses across the state have been impacted by the storm and experienced major physical and economic loss. Many businesses in San Marcos were flooded for the second time this year and are reporting that they will not reopen again.

Many areas of the state have again seen historic levels of flooding as a result of the October weather, and over-saturated soils from this prolonged event are causing dangerous flash flooding. Many areas are still flooded.

The Preliminary Damage Assessments have identified 1,299 homes have been destroyed or received major damage, and 2,634 homes have been affected or received minor damages. The following is detailed information on the impacted population, including percentage of insurance, percentage below poverty level, median household income, and percentage of elderly, disabled and pre-disaster unemployment rates.

October 2015 Severe Weather Event					
	Average of Persons Below Poverty Level in Percent	Median Household Income in dollars	Percent of Elderly (Age 65 and Older) in percent	Percent of Disabled (Under the Age of 65) in percent	Percent Pre-Disaster Unemployment (March 2015)
National Average	15.4	\$53,046.00	14.1	8.4	5.4
State Average	17.6	\$51,900.00	11.2	8.2	4.2
Counties					
Bastrop	16.5	\$51,750.00	17.9	9.5	3.7
Brazoria	11.2	\$67,603.00	10.6	7.1	4.2
Caldwell	18.7	\$44,152.00	12.9	12.6	4.1
Comal	10.2	\$65,839.00	17	9.1	3.6
Galveston	13.3	\$61,877	12.8	8.8	4.7
Guadalupe	9.7	\$61,958.00	12.7	9	3.3
Hardin	10.9	\$53,013	15.2	12.2	4.9
Harris	18.5	\$53,137.00	9	6.6	5.2
Hidalgo	34.8	\$34,146.00	10	9.7	7.6
Liberty	19.6	\$47,228.00	12.5	14.5	6.4
Navarro	21.1	\$40,795.00	15.5	13	4.5
Travis	17.4	\$58,025.00	8.1	6.6	3.2
Willacy	43.1	\$25,886	12.6	12.3	12.2
Wilson	11.5	\$64,571.00	14.3	9.8	3.5

Table 1. Data from US Census Records except unemployment data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The following table provides a brief analysis of property insurance in affected counties.

County Name	Total Policy Count	2010 Census Data	Percentage of Insurance
Bastrop	14,097	74171	19.01%
Brazoria	86,730	313166	27.69%
Caldwell	5,571	38066	14.6%
Comal	44814	10842	41.31%
Galveston	90,237	291309	30.9%
Guadalupe	36,386	131533	27.66%
Hardin	11,680	54,635	21.3%
Harris	1,065,866	4092459	26.04%
Hays	54,453	157107	34.66%
Hidalgo	95,850	774769	12.37%
Liberty	11,916	75643	15.75%
Navarro	9,009	47735	18.87%
Travis	382,862	1024266	37.38%
Willacy	2,020	22,058	9%
Wilson	7,914	42918	18.44%
Total - All Listed Counties	1,919,405	7,150,677	

Note: Includes counties with local declarations as of November 10, 2015. Includes: homeowner, residential dwelling, renters/condo, farm & ranch dwelling, and farm owner's policies. This excludes policies written by farm mutual insurers and policies written in the surplus lines market. These policies do not include flood policies.

Table 2. 2014 Texas Property Insurance

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Texas has had a presidential disaster declaration this year for the severe weather events from May 4 to June 22, 2015. The state continues to work DR-4223-TX in addition to 15 open disasters, including major disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Ike, and the most destructive wildfires in Texas history, the 2011 wildfires. In the past 12 months, the state has experienced numerous local flooding, tornado and wildfire events. The wildfire threat continues with Bastrop County receiving a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) for the Hidden Pines Fire in October of this year.

The Honorable Barack Obama
November 20, 2015
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Since 2010, Texas has suffered through one of the worst droughts in the state's history. In the 12 months prior to the May severe weather, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued 17 Secretarial Disaster Drought Declarations covering more than 200 of the state's 254 counties. Texas had been under an extended drought proclamation from the Office of the Governor for over four years. On October 21, the USDA issued 11 Secretarial Disaster Drought Declarations covering 46 of the state's 254 counties.

CLOSING

Pursuant to 44 CFR § 206.36 (Major Disaster), this incident is of such magnitude and severity that effective response is beyond state and local capability, and supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives and protect property, public health and safety.

As a result of this disaster, the State of Texas is specifically requesting a major disaster declaration for: Individual Assistance including the Individuals and Households Programs (IA), Other Needs Assistance (ONA), Crisis Counseling, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Disaster Legal Assistance, Disaster Case Management for Bastrop, Brazoria, Caldwell, Comal, Galveston, Guadalupe, Hardin, Harris, Hays, Hidalgo, Liberty, Navarro, Travis, Willacy and Wilson Counties and Hazard Mitigation Statewide. I am also requesting U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Program for Physical and Economic Loss for the same counties.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Abbott", written in a cursive style.

Greg Abbott
Governor

GA:sck

Enclosures: OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13
A: Individual Assistance